

XVIII.—Notice of two new Species of Mammals (*Propithecus* and *Hemicentetes*) from Madagascar. By Dr. ALBERT GÜNTHER, F.R.S. &c.

MR. CROSSLEY has recently sent another collection from Madagascar* ; among the specimens selected for the British Museum are two apparently undescribed species of Mammals. Two adult specimens of *Ericulus*, one of which is of blackish, the other of whitish colour, appear to correspond to the *E. spinosus* and *E. nigrescens* of Grandidier's List of Madagascar Mammals, in 'Rev. et Mag. Zool.' 1867, p. 318. Our specimens are of different sexes—the dark ones being males, and the light-coloured females. The spines of the latter are rather more slender than those of the other specimens. It is very probable that these differences in the colour and spines are merely sexual.

Propithecus holomelas.

Allied to and nearly of the same size as *P. Edwardsii*. Throat and all the lower parts covered with dense fine woolly hair. Male with a small patch of ferruginous hairs radiating from a centre in the middle of the chest, opposite to the manubrium sterni ; in the female this patch is replaced by two smaller ones placed side by side, and the hairs are of a whitish colour. All the upper parts deep black, except the back of the root of the tail, which is brownish. Abdomen greyish brown. A few whitish hairs at the extremity of the tail.

	Male.	Female.
	in.	in.
Length of body	23	23
Length of tail	16	15

I have examined two adult males and two females ; they were obtained at Fienerentova.

Hemicentetes nigriceps.

The upper part of the head black, without or with only a trace of the median white band by which *H. madagascariensis* is characterized. Body covered with woolly hair, slender spines being scattered almost uniformly over the back and sides ; neck with a transverse band of closely set long spines or bristles, as in the other species, but the bristles are more

* See Proc. Zool. Soc. 1875, p. 78.

numerous. Upper parts black, with the neck and a short stripe in the middle of the back white; another white curved band on each side of the back. A more or less distinct black stripe along the middle of the abdomen.

In one specimen the white colour is replaced by pink.

Several adult and young examples from Fienerentova. Length 7 inches.

XIX.—*Notes Introductory to the Study and Classification of the SPONGIDA.* By H. J. CARTER, F.R.S. &c.

[Continued from p. 40.]

Part II. PROPOSED CLASSIFICATION OF THE SPONGIDA.

IN the general classification of the Spongida there is not much difficulty, as the skeleton (which too often is the only part that reaches us, from the inaccessible places in which many of them grow and the accidental circumstances under which they reach the shore) consists of durable material which, in structure and composition, admits of very easy arrangement; while where there is no skeleton at all, this alone for such sponges is sufficiently characteristic of the order.

But in the more particular classification there are peculiar difficulties, inasmuch as there is no expression in sponges as in other animals and in plants; that is, there is nothing like a *calice*, as in the coral, and nothing like a *flower*, as in the plant, to guide us—what there is in this respect, viz. the *spongozoon*, being microscopic in size, undistinguishably alike and so protean in form as only in its *active* living state *in situ*, or just after it has been eliminated from the sponge, distinguishable from a common amœban animal.

Again, as regards the general form of the sponge itself, there are many instances where the same form may be assumed by totally different species, and the same species assume different forms, so that a microscopical examination of the “proper spicule” can alone determine the species; thus a fan-shaped and a vase-like form respectively may have at one time the same, and at another a different form of spicule. And yet again the aid derived from the form of the “proper spicule” is confined to sponges so provided, while those which have nothing but foreign objects instead of the “proper spicule” are even